

CHAPTER 5 Other CEQA Considerations

Section 15126 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. As part of this analysis, the EIR must also identify (1) significant environmental effects of the proposed project, (2) significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented, (3) significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project, (4) growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project, (5) mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects, and (6) alternatives to the proposed project.

5.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Table 2-1 (Summary of Environmental Effects and Code Requirements/Mitigation Measures) of this EIR, and Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this EIR provide a comprehensive discussion of the proposed project's environmental effects, including the level of significance both before and after mitigation.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Development of the proposed project would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related impacts:

■ Air Quality

- > **Project Specific and Cumulative**—Construction of the proposed project would violate an air quality standard as it would result in emissions that exceed the SCAQMD threshold of significance for VOC.

■ Traffic

- > **Cumulative**—Under 2030 conditions, operation of the proposed project would cumulatively contribute to an unacceptable Level of Service at two City intersections.
- > **Cumulative**— Under 2030 conditions, operation of the proposed project would cumulatively contribute to an increase in delay at two Caltrans intersections and would increase traffic to the I-405 northbound loop ramp, which is currently deficient.

5.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that the proposed project would cause. Specifically, Section 15126.2(c) states:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts, and particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. [Section 15126.3(c)]

The construction and implementation of the proposed project will entail the commitment of energy, human resources, and building materials, commensurate with that of other projects of similar magnitude, and none of these commodities are in short supply. Manpower would also be committed for the construction of buildings and public facilities necessary to support the new development.

Ongoing maintenance and operation of the project will entail a further commitment of energy resources in the form of natural gas, electricity, and water resources. Long-term impacts would also result from an increase in vehicular traffic, and associated air pollutant and noise emissions. This commitment of energy resources will be a long-term obligation in view of the fact that, practically speaking, it is impossible to return the land to its original condition once it has been developed. However, as established in Section 4.14 (Utilities/Service Systems), consistent with the BECSP land use program and EIR analysis, the impacts of increased energy usage are not considered significant adverse environmental impacts.

In summary, implementation of the proposed project would involve the following irreversible environmental changes to existing on-site natural resources:

- Commitment of energy and water resources as a result of the operation and maintenance of the proposed development
- Alteration of the existing topographic character of the site

5.4 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that this section discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic, population, or housing growth, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Growth-inducing impacts are caused by those characteristics of a project that tend to foster or encourage population and/or economic growth. Inducements to growth include the generation of construction and permanent employment opportunities in the service sector of the economy. A project could also induce growth by lowering or removing barriers to growth or by creating an amenity that attracts new population or economic activity. According to Section 6.0 of the General Plan EIR (City 1996), incorporated herein by reference, implementation of the General Plan would induce growth, particularly in the associated removal of impediments to growth (e.g., provision of new access to an area) and increased potential for economic expansion. As discussed in Chapter 3 (Project Description), the residential growth proposed under the proposed project would not exceed that identified in the General Plan or the subsequently approved BECSP. The following actions of the proposed project have the potential to result in growth inducement:

- Development of additional housing supply
- Generation of employment opportunities, including short-term, construction employment opportunities

5.4.1 Additional Housing Supply

The residential component of the proposed project consists of 105 residential units. Therefore, the proposed project would introduce new residential uses which would likely induce growth. BECSP Section 2.1.1 establishes the maximum amount of net new development (MAND) of residential and commercial development permitted in the BECSP, which ultimately included 4,500 residential dwelling units and associated commercial uses. Based on the City's estimated persons per household ratio of 2.67 and the maximum number of dwelling units permitted under the BECSP, full build-out of the BECSP would result in a total population increase of 12,015 residents.¹⁴² Implementation of the proposed project would result in the construction of up to a maximum of 105 dwelling units that would result in an estimated population increase of approximately 280 persons. The proposed project would account for approximately 2 percent of the potential population growth that would occur as a result of full build-out of the BECSP. As a result of the number of housing units that would be developed under the project, on a site that has not be previously developed with residential uses, the proposed project would be considered growth inducing with respect to housing. The proposed project is 15 dwelling units less than contemplated on the site in the IS and would not exceed the total number of housing units permitted under the BECSP.

5.4.2 Employment Generation

Development of the proposed project would generate short-term, construction-related employment opportunities. These opportunities would occur over the approximate 3.5-year duration of the construction period. Given the supply of construction workers in the local work force, it is likely that these workers would come from within the Orange County area, and no in-migration of workers would be anticipated. Due to the nature of construction activities, the employment opportunities resulting from project construction would not be considered permanent.

In addition, development of the proposed project would generate long-term employment opportunities associated with commercial uses programmed for the project site. Long-term employment opportunities at the project site would address the demand for employment opportunities in the region and therefore, would not be considered a growth-inducing impact to the region.

¹⁴² California Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001–2010, with 2000 Benchmark (Sacramento, California, May 2010).

